Frederick II., called the Great, K. of Prussia

1764 c 18

# An EPISTLE
FROM THE
# King of PRUSSIA,
TO
# Monsieur VOLTAIRE.

In FRENCH and ENGLISH.

THE SECOND EDITION.

[ Price Six-pence. ]

BRITISH MUSEUM

# EPITRE

DE SA MAJESTÉ

# Le Roi de PRUSSE,

A

# Monsieur VOLTAIRE.

LONDRE:

Chez R. et J. DODSLEY en Pall-mall. 1758.

# An EPISTLE

FROM THE

# King of PRUSSIA,

TO

# Monſieur VOLTAIRE.

Tranſlated into ENGLISH from the ORIGINAL FRENCH.

LONDON:

Printed for R. and J. DODSLEY in Pall-mall. 1758.

# EPITRE

## DE SA MAJESTÉ

# Le Roi de PRUSSE.

CROYEZ que ſi j'etois, VOLTAIRE,
Particulier aujourdhui,
Me contentant du neceſſaire,
Je verrois envoler la fortune legere,
Et m'en mocquerois comme lui.
Je connois l'ennui des grandeurs,
Le fardeau des devoirs, le jargon des flateurs,
Et tout l'amas des petiteſſes,

BRITISH MUSEUM

Et

# An EPISTLE

FROM THE

# King of PRUSSIA, &c.

VOLTAIRE, believe me, were I now
In private life's calm ſtation plac'd,
Let Heav'n for nature's wants allow,
With cold indiff'rence would I view
~~Changing~~ *departing* Fortune's winged haſte
And laugh at her caprice like you.
Th' inſipid farce of tedious ſtate,
Imperial duty's real weight,
The faithleſs courtier's ſupple bow,

Et leurs genres et leurs eſpeces,
Dont il faut s'occuper dans le ſein des honneurs.
Je mepriſe la vaine gloire,
Quoique Poëte et Souverain,
Quand du Ciſeau fatal retranchant mon deſtin
Atropos m'aura vu plongé dans la nuit noire,
Que m'importe l'honneur incertain
De vivre apres ma mort au temple de Memoire:
Un inſtant de bonheur vaut mille ans dans l'hiſtoire,
Nos deſtins ſont ils donc ſi beaux?

The fickle multitude's careſs,
And the Great Vulgar's *Littleneſs*,
By long experience well I know;
And, tho' a Prince and Poet born,
Vain blandiſhments of Glory ſcorn.
For when the ruthleſs ſhears of Fate
Have cut my life's precarious thread,
And rank'd me with th' unconſcious dead,
What wil't avail that I *was* great,
Or that th' uncertain tongue of Fame
In Mem'ry's temple chaunts my name?
One bliſsful moment whilſt we live
Weighs more than ages of renown;
What then do Potentates receive
Of good, peculiarly their own?

Sweet

Le doux Plaiſir et la Molleſſe,
La vive et naïve Allegreſſe
Ont toujours fui des grands, la pompe, et les faiſcaux,
Nes pour la liberté leurs troupes enchantreſſes
Preferent l'aimable pareſſe
Aux auſteres devoirs guides de nos travaux.
Auſſi la Fortune volage
N'a jamais cauſé mes ennuis,
Soit qu'elle m'agaçe, ou qu'elle m'outrage,
Je dormirai toutes les nuits
En lui refuſant mon hommage.
Mais notre etat nous fait la loi,
Il nous oblige, il nous engage
A meſurer notre courage,
Sur ce qu'exige notre emploi.

Voltaire

Sweet Eaſe and unaffected Joy,
Domeſtic Peace, and ſportive Pleaſure,
The regal throne and palace fly,
And, born for liberty, prefer
Soft ſilent ſcenes of lovely leiſure,
To, what we Monarchs buy ſo dear,
The thorny pomp of ſcepter'd care.
My pain or bliſs ſhall ne'er depend
On fickle Fortune's caſual flight,
For, whether ſhe's my foe or friend,
In calm repoſe I'll paſs the night;
And ne'er by watchful homage own
I court her ſmile, or fear her frown.
But from our ſtations we derive
Unerring precepts how to live,
And certain deeds each rank calls forth,
By which is meaſur'd human worth.

Voltaire dans ſons hermitage,
Dans un païs dont l'heritage
Eſt ſon antique bonne foi,
Peut s'addonner en paix a la vertu du ſage
Dont Platon nous marque la loi.
Pour moi menacé du naufrage,
Je dois, en affrontant l'orage,
Penſer, vivre, et mourir en Roi.

BRITISH
23 JUN 26
MUSEUM

FIN.

Voltaire, within his private cell
In realms where ancient honeſty
Is patrimonial property,
And ſacred Freedom loves to dwell,
May give up all *his* peaceful mind,
Guided by Plato's deathleſs page,
In ſilent ſolitude reſign'd
To the mild virtues of a Sage;
But I, 'gainſt whom wild whirlwinds wage
Fierce war with wreck-denouncing wing,
Muſt be, to face the tempeſt's rage,
In thought, in life, and death a King.

THE END.

BRITISH
23 JUN 26
MUSEUM